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Historical connection



GREG FARMINGER/POSTMEDIA NETWORK
Janet and Laverne Tritton hold their invitation to the unveiling of the Lincoln Tank Memorial in the U.K. Laverne is a relative of the inventor of the world's first military tank developed 100 years ago. See story page 2.



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■ **MEMORIAL:** Fenwick man tied to invention of weapon that helped end First World War

Tracks of a tank

GREG FURNINGER
Postmedia Network

Laverne Tritton made a side trip to the U.K. city of Lincoln last fall to see the road that bears his family name.

Little did the Fenwick man know it would lead to him smack dab in the middle of celebrations next month for the 100th anniversary of the world's first military tank.

The 77-year-old said he had heard "rumours" growing up from his grandfather that he was related to the inventor of the mightiest fighting machine.

"The story was stretched a bit, so I wasn't sure," he said. Well, by a series of happenstances Laverne recently came to learn that indeed his grandfather's first cousin, William Ashbee Tritton, was the central figure in developing the vehicle credited with shortening the First World War and as a result sparing thousands of lives.

Laverne's story goes back a few years, to when Jane, started talking about a tour of Europe to include stops in London, Paris and Rome.

"I just love history, and I wanted him to see some of the old things," she said.

A reluctant flyer, Laverne eventually conceded to at least visit the Eiffel Tower and Buckingham Palace, so last September they crossed the Atlantic.

Son Randy, who recently took up tracing his family's roots, had stumbled across a Tritton Rd. in Lincoln the day before the couple departed. Janet and Laverne decided they would fit in a day trip, about a 21/2-hour train ride from London, to check it out.

"We wanted to see this road and its roundabout and retail park," Laverne said of three landmarks, each bearing the

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE LINCOLN TANK

Official memorial page:
www.lincolntankmemorial.co.uk

Facebook page:
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Tritton name.

While in Lincoln, "a beautiful old city" with an urban population of about 94,600 and which dates back to the Romans and Normans, the couple boarded a double-decker tour bus and made their way to seats on the upper level.

A friendly guide by the name of Arlene Turner exchanged pleasantries and inquired from where the couple hailed.

What were their names? The Tritton response sparked a smile.

And as the local couple now know, it set off a whirlwind.

Turner immediately told them of the ceremony tied to the invention of the Lincoln tank, and how a memorial replicating its early design and celebrating its female builders would be unveiled in May 2015.

"Since then, we've had so many people e-mailing us," said Laverne.

"It's just mushroomed," said Janet.

As a result of good timing on that September trip, Laverne and Janet received a formal invitation from the Lincoln Tank Memorial Group for the May 10 unveiling. Laverne will participate in its ribbon cutting.

The couple leave May 6,

the day of their 54th wedding anniversary.

The Trittons will be accompanied by daughter their Lisa Vandenhaeghe and her daughter Waverly, who's turning 16, and Randy. Sons Jeffery and Darrell cannot make it due to other commitments.

The Lincolnshire Committee of Seafarers is hosting a May 8 black tie dinner at the White Hart Hotel, where the Trittons are special guests — and where the story began a century ago.

At that time, top secret work was being carried out in a room at the White Hart Hotel by William Foster & Co. engineering company managing director William Ashbee Tritton, with chief draughtsman William Rigby and Maj. Walter Gordon Wilson.

The project they were working on was deliberately misrepresented as a water carrier for Mesopotamia, to conceal its true purpose.

According to lore, weapons referred to them as "water tanks" — or simply tanks.

The tanks were needed to carry large guns and break the stalemate of trench warfare, in a conflict that had been expected to end by Christmas 1914.

It took 37 days to develop the first prototype.

It was nicknamed the Little Willy, for William Ashbee, an expert in agricultural machinery and the son of a London stockbroker.

Caterpillar tracks kept coming off the first model, so the tank was redesigned with a track that went around both sides of its body. That became known as Big Willy.

By 1916, the tanks were in full production in Lincoln.

The Daily Mail that year described them in a headline:

"Like Toads with No Wheels or Legs"

A later headline in *The Evening Express* would declare "Record Sprint Across the Trenches."

After the war, in 1919, Tritton and Wilson were recognized by a royal commission tasked with deciding if anyone was deserving of special mention of financial reward for the creation of the tank. Both men were given 15,000 pounds to share.

Tritton gave most of his share to his employees.

In recognition of its city's proud heritage and to commemorate the vehicle's 100th anniversary, the Lincoln Tank Memorial Group was formed by local residents dedicated to putting a flat 11/2-life-sized model of a tank on the Tritton Rd. roundabout, close to the site of where the Foster factory stood.

The memorial — in the form of a partly constructed tank — includes figures of Tritton, Rigby and Wilson and recognizes the efforts made by civilian men and women — munitionettes — in its production.

Julie Cooke, the memorial committee's secretary, is thrilled Laverne Tritton stumbled onto her group's radar screen.

"We were absolutely delighted when Laverne got in touch with us," she said in e-mailed correspondence for this article.

"Our original intention was to have representatives of the Tritton, Wilson and Rigby family along with the daughter of a munitionette at the unveiling, but until Laverne got in touch we were unable to track down any relative of Sir William Tritton."

The pioneering Tritton —



SUPPLIED PHOTO

This photograph shows an early version of the Lincoln Tank.

who in 1917 was knighted by King George V — married later in life and had no children of his own before he died at age 70 in 1946.

Part of next month's celebrations include the black tie dinner the Trittons have been invited to, which will feature a modern-day take on the menu of a dinner that was held in the White Hart Hotel after the war to celebrate the invention of the tank, Cooke said.

The main event is two days later, an 11 a.m. unveiling of the memorial.

"We will have a troop of soldiers and pipes and drums from the Royal Tank Regiment present and, weather permitting, a fly-past by a Spitfire from the Battle of Britain Flight," Cooke said in her correspondence.

"The lord lieutenant of Lincolnshire will be there along with the mayor and mayoral party. After the unveiling there will be a 20-minute presentation by Richard Pullen, one of our committee members but also an author of four books on the tank," she said.

After the unveiling, Niagara's Tritton family will attend a reception at Lincoln University, adjacent to the roundabout.

The Trittons will also participate in a lecture on the Lincoln tank, visit the local tank museum and visit William Ashbee Tritton's Tank Room at the White Hart Hotel.

"Having exchanged many e-mails with Laverne and Janet, we are really looking forward to meeting them and their family and hope they enjoy their stay in our beautiful

city," Cooke said. Laverne said since his trip last fall, like son Randy he has been researching his family tree online.

Laverne's grandfather, William Ashbee's cousin, was one of the Bernardo Boys who in 1894 immigrated to Canada, settling in the West Lincoln hamlet of Bismark.

The retired CP Rail engineer and Niagara Falls yards foreman who started his career with the TH&B Line, said his journey overseas and subsequent research have given him a sense of closeness to William Ashbee.

He and Janet wouldn't miss being part of a celebration of his achievements.

"It costs us a fortune — we were just there in September — but we've got to be there," said Janet, at one time an administrative secretary at Atlas Steels in Welland.

Added Laverne: "I really want to be there."

"It's just remarkable. It's a real honour to be able to be there."

Credit for this latest chapter in the Tritton family history can be chalked up to that inquisitive Lincoln tour guide, Arlene Turner, who again will give the Trittons a tour of Lincoln upon their return for the tank memorial's lake weekend.

"If it wasn't for her, we wouldn't have known anything and just taken home pictures of the road," said Janet. "It's just amazing where this has led."

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LOCAL NEWS

■ **PEACE PARK:** Thursday night concerts in Pelham will be licensed events

Supper, song – and wine

MARYANNE FIRTH
Postmedia Network

Visitors to Pelham's Peace Park will soon be able to sit back on the grassy knoll, enjoy a glass of wine and take in the sounds of Thursday night concerts.

Town council approved a number of recommendations Monday night intended to enhance the experience of visitors to Pelham Farmers' Market and Super Market, and of audiences at the Fort-Hill Bandshell Concert Series.

The most significant change of them all, which has raised some eyebrows in the community, will see all of Peace Park licensed for sale of wine and craft beer on Thursday evenings during the warmer months.

The decision, which is intended to allow for better crowd monitoring, came as the result of a recommendation from the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario, Mayor Dave Augustyn said.

There has been some public concern, he said, that licensing the entire park will impact the all-age experience enjoyed by many in the past.

"We don't want to take away from the family atmosphere," Augustyn stressed.

The town will be putting a "small, discrete fence boundary" in place around the park's perimeter to identify the designated area where alcohol is permitted, he said.

"It shouldn't be obtrusive. It will delineate where people can go if they have a beverage."

Licensing the park is being considered a pilot project, Augustyn said, and will be closely monitored both by staff and by a joint promotions committee including representatives from both markets and the concert series.

Feedback from the public, the mayor added, will be both welcomed and encouraged.

"We want to be nimble enough to make changes where they need to be made and quickly," he said.

"We want to make sure this works" Council also opted to approve the sale of sealed bottles of VQA (Vintners Quality Alliance) wines at the Farmers' Market, as well as limited wine sampling.

The addition came as a result of a request from the market executive.

A single booth will be used for wine sales at the market. Three wineries will take turns manning the booth and offering their products on differing weeks.

Wine sold at the market will not be permitted to be consumed in the licensed park area, where individual drinks will instead be sold.

The town is going to explore the option of having a "bottle check" station,

Pelham Farmers' Market: Thursdays from May 7 to Oct. 8, 4:30 p.m. until dusk.

Pelham Supper Market: Thursdays from June 4 to Sept. 3, 4:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Fort-Hill Bandshell Concert Series: Thursdays from June 18 to Sept. 3, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Augustyn said.

It will act similar to a coat check and allow shoppers to leave wine bottles and purchases in a safe location while entering the park to enjoy some music.

The addition of the VQA wines seemed a natural fit for the market, vice-chair Stacey Duncan said.

"Wineries are farmers as well, local farmers," he said.

"We want to showcase what we have and bring it closer to people."

While Duncan was pleased with the market changes, he did have some concerns about council's decision to license Peace Park.

"It involves fencing around the park area and takes away from the free and open atmosphere," he said, while noting the market is not included in the fenced-in area.

"There's a bit of separation there."

Duncan is looking forward to providing feedback through the new promotions committee.

He stressed the importance of consulting the public at the Thursday night events in order to ensure their experience is not negatively impacted by the changes.

Stations are expected to be set up throughout all three areas, including the two markets and the park, to help gather opinions and determine what is working and what isn't, Duncan said.

He believes the three initiatives working together will create a larger draw in downtown Fort-Hill, but said "only time will tell" how the changes will impact each individual group.

Augustyn described council's approval of the changes as "taking the next logical step" in progressing the weeknight festivities.

"We want to build on the success of past years so people have the complete Thursday evening experience."

Changes also approved at Monday's meeting include an expansion of the number of vendors at the Super Market, addition of cooking demonstrations by local chefs, improvements to the grading in front of the bandshell to better accommodate seating and improvements to the walkability of the park.



MARYANNE FIRTH/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Pelham council approved the sale of VQA wines at the town's farmers' market Monday night. Market vice-chair Stacey Duncan is pleased with the decision. He is pictured on Wednesday in Pelham.



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Please help to protect the Fonthill Kame, again

DAVE AUGUSTYN
 For PelhamNews

The Ontario government is seeking feedback as it reviews four land-use plans: Greenbelt Plan, Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, Oak Ridges-McMurrin Conservation Plan, and Niagara Escarpment Plan.

On behalf of Pelham town council, I recently wrote to the expert advisory panel of this land-use planning review and implored members to increase the protection of the Fonthill Kame. I am hoping that you, too, will write to the panel to indicate your support.

The Fonthill Kame-Delta is Niagara's rare, 75-metre-tall landmark that was formed by retreating glaciers 13,000 years ago. At six kilometres long, three kilometres wide and

nearly 1,000 hectares, the Fonthill Kame boasts the highest point in the Niagara region.

As the "hill" in Fonthill and Shorthills and the "ridge" in Ridgville, the feature also serves as a significant water recharge area and forms the headwaters of the Twelve Mile Creek. Further, the Kame's microclimatic and soil conditions create an ideal environment for tender fruit production including peaches, sweet and sour cherries, plums and pears.

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) identified the Fonthill Kame as provincially significant in 1976 and as a Provincial "Area of Natural and Scientific Interest" (ANSI) in 1988 as a way to help restrict development.

The province also protected parts of the kame with general provisions in either the Niagara Escarpment Plan or specific provisions

in the 2005 Greenbelt Plan.

And, you will recall that after considerable public feedback, research and scientific evaluation, MNR confirmed a new ANSI boundary for the kame in October 2013.

Sadly, however, despite these efforts to protect it, residential development and aggregate extraction pressures seriously threaten the kame.

As the province reviews the Greenbelt Plan and the Niagara Escarpment Plan, it could inadvertently (or purposefully) lessen these protections of the Fonthill Kame.

That's why I wrote the expert panel and urged members to reinforce the recent ANSI re-designation by increasing the protection of the Fonthill Kame in land use plans. (Please see a copy of my letter at www.pelhammayor-dave.blogspot.com.)

Now, I am asking you to provide similar

feedback to the panel before May 28; please let the panel know that you are interested in protecting the kame and curtailing further aggregate extraction or development.

Please e-mail your comments to landuse-planningreview@ontario.ca or send mail to: Land Use Planning Review, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Ontario Growth Secretariat, 777 Bay St., Suite 425 (4th floor), Toronto, Ont. M5G 2E5.

Thank you for helping to further protect the Fonthill Kame so that its distinctive features, microclimatic and water recharge functions might be better safeguarded for future generations.

You may contact Mayor Dave at mayordave@pelham.ca with questions or to suggest future topics. Check out links for documents and past columns at www.pelhammayor-dave.blogspot.com.



HARRY STOTT PHOTO

French freighter Rocroi Montreal July 1965.

Shipwrecks – Rocroi

SKIP GILLHAM
 Special to Postmedia Network

The French freighter Rocroi was built in 1958 and made a single trip into the Seaway the following year. It arrived at Halifax on March 25, 1966, when the "tween deck" area, loaded with steel, collapsed crushing the collection of new tractors and vehicles that had been underneath. The cargo had been loaded in Germany and France for Canadian delivery when things went wrong.

The massive damage was cleaned up and the ship was repaired. It resumed sailing later in the year as Louis Delmas and retained French registry until 1976.

The vessel had three more names until it was badly damaged again on Aug. 15, 1984. This time the ship was about 18 miles off Mohka, Yemen, and enroute to Berbera, Somalia, when it hit a mine.

Now sailing as Theopolis, the ship managed to stay afloat and proceeded to India and was laid up. Its fate did not take long to determine and, following a sale to area shipbreakers, the former lakes trader arrived at Alang, India, on Sept. 30, 1984, and scrapping was soon underway.

LOCAL NEWS

■ **RIVER RESCUE:** Fisherman hits head falling into water

Injured man saved from gorge

TONY RICCIUTO
Postmedia Network

A fisherman was rescued from the Niagara River Gorge after he slipped into the water and was injured on Wednesday.

Niagara Helicopters and members of the Niagara Parks Police High Angle River Team were called to help with the rescue shortly after noon near the Whirlpool in Niagara Falls.

As a precaution, an ORNGE air ambulance landed near the Niagara Glen, but was not required to take a patient for treatment.

NPP Insp. Paul Forcier said two men, who are not from Niagara, were fishing when they became stranded on a rock. One man slipped and injured himself when his head struck a rock. The men were unable to get back to shore safely on their own.

Jack Cashman, a visitor from Vermont who was in the Glen with his family, witnessed the incident.

"He was fishing off a flat rock with a friend, standing near the edge, and a swell of water came over the top of the rock and it looked like he slipped into the water. He fell and hit his head," said Cashman.

"His buddy grabbed him and was able to drag him out, but we could see him convulsing."

Cashman and his son-in-law called down to the men and asked if they needed medical help.

The one man said his friend was unconscious from hitting his head and that might have caused him to go

into a seizure.

The son-in-law attempted to make his way down to assist the two men, but there was too much water around the rock. He was not able to reach them.

Cashman called his daughter on her cellphone because she had already gone ahead and was nearing the top of the Glen. He explained the situation and she called 911.

When rescue personnel arrived, Cashman went with them into the gorge to where the men were located.

"A helicopter was brought in and they were able to lift both men off the rock," said Cashman.

Police said the two men were lifted to street level where the injured man was examined by paramedics and found to have minor injuries. He was released at the scene.

Forcier said the two men were fishing during the morning when they were surprised by the rising water levels that occurs at that time. That left them stranded on the rock.

"If you stick to the marked trails you won't run into any difficulties," said Forcier. "Clearly, these gentlemen were off the marked trails. I know their intention was fishing, but they put themselves in a precarious situation that became more precarious."

Fishermen are being advised to stay off the rocks when fishing in the Whirlpool area.

tony.ricciuto@summedia.ca



MIKE DIBATTISTA/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

An Ornge air ambulance, Niagara Helicopters and emergency personnel responded to a gorge rescue at the Niagara Glen in Niagara Falls on Wednesday.

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■ WASTE MANAGEMENT

Hawk keeps eagle eye over landfill site

ROB HOULE
Postmedia Network

If you were driving up or down Mountain Rd. in West Lincoln and didn't know it's there, you would probably miss it.

One of the tell-tale signs of the area is the presence of gulls, but such is not the case at Niagara Region's landfill site on Concession 7 Rd. in West Lincoln, about a kilometre east of Mountain Rd., where Taka keeps a hawkish eye out for the

garbage eaters. The gulls are scared to death of Taka, which in Japanese means bird of prey. Their fear is really based — she could tear them apart. Taka is a Harris's hawk on contract to the Region. Her domain of the skies over the 45-acre landfill is such that she doesn't even have to be there to keep the area free of the prolific poopers. Just the belief she might be there is enough to turn the gulls into chickens. Therefore, she only has to work there part time.

Niagara residents on a tour of

the landfill site Thursday were introduced to Taka and her handler, Yukio Yamada of Bird Control Services. The company is also contracted to keep gulls away from the Region's Ojibwastone Landfill Site in south Welland.

"We've established with the gull-patrol program that this landfill belongs to the hawk," Andrew Winters, Niagara Region program manager, told the small group of residents who mounted a bus at regional headquarters in Thorold for

the tour, one of three organized by the Region this week to mark Earth Day, which was Wednesday. The Region gave tours of its recycling plant in Niagara Falls on Tuesday and is scheduled to give a walking tour of the Glenridge Quarry Naturalization Site, a former dump, at 400 St. David's Rd. at 1:30 p.m. Friday.

Edna Groff of St. Catharines signed up for the tour of the West Lincoln landfill site because "I want to see what my tax dollars are doing," she said as the bus pulled out of Region headquarters. Joining her was David Spencer — "I conned him into coming," Groff said.

"I was a mechanic for years, so I'm interested in seeing how the machinery is used," Spencer said.

Groff said Spencer is a meticulous recycler, going so far as to remove the plastic windows on letters before dropping them into the grey recycling bin.

Janet Pinder joined the tour because she was curious. "I want to know what they do with it [garbage],"

The West Lincoln landfill bears little resemblance to those of yesterday, where residents simply backed up, dumped their garbage and a bulldozer pushed it into a hole and it was buried. Today's landfills are a lot more managed. When arriving on site, residents drive onto a scale where their vehicles are weighed. They are weighed again on the way out, and pay a tipage fee based on the difference in weight from entry to departure. There is no charge for dropping off hazardous waste material such as paints and oils, batteries and propane tanks, nor is there a charge for dumping compostable yard waste or electronics. Those dumping household waste or recyclables are directed to an elevated area with container stations. The containers to

the left in West Lincoln are for household waste and wood. When they are full they picked up and transported to an area of the site where they will be buried. The burial sites was prepped by excavating dirt, dumping and compacting one metre of clay soil to contain leachate, adding stone and then perforated pipe to collect the leachate, which is pumped to Grimsby's water-treatment plant.

The containers to the right are for recyclables, such as metal, tires and "white goods" (fridges, freezers, air conditioners). The refrigerant is removed from the white goods prior to recycling. There is no charge for dropping off recyclables, which the Region sells. The Region also charges a fee to take singles, which it in turn pays a London, Ont., recycling company to take.

Winters said the West Lincoln landfill has about another 40 years of life.

While the landfill is situated on 45 acres, it's actually part of 500-acre parcel owned by the Region. The rest of the land not used for landfill provides a buffer between the dump and surrounding neighbours.

Spencer came away from the tour impressed.

"I'm just amazed at the cleanliness," he said, noting there was next to no odour emanating from the site.

The Region took possession of the site in 1999 from the municipalities of West Lincoln, Grimsby, Lincoln and Pelham, with the understanding its use be limited to residents of those four municipalities. The year-round hazardous waste depot, however, is open to all Niagara residents.

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Form 2 NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL TO EXPROPRIATE LAND Expropriations Act

IN THE MATTER OF an application by The Corporation of the Town of Pelham, for approval to expropriate and for the purpose of an easement for the construction, maintenance, repair and operation of a storm water outlet for the storm water management pond serving the Cherry Ridge Subdivision in the Town of Pelham, and works ancillary thereto.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that application has been made for approval to expropriate land, as described as follows:

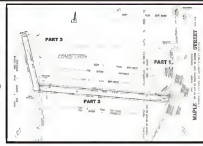
AN EASEMENT in perpetuity commanding on the date of registration of the plan of expropriation in, on, over, under and through the lands described as Part of Lots 18 and 16, Concession 9 Pelham and Part of the Road Allowance between Lots 15 and 16, Concession 9 Pelham, in the Town of Pelham and the Regional Municipality of Niagara, being more particularly identified as Parts 2 and 3 on Reference Plan 559-12563, registered in the Land Titles Office for the Land Titles Division of Niagara South, for the purpose of entering upon and occupying the land with all necessary vehicles, machinery, equipment and material required to facilitate the construction, maintenance, repair and operation of a storm water outlet for the storm water management pond serving the Cherry Ridge Subdivision in the Town of Pelham, and works ancillary thereto.

Any owner of lands in respect of which notice is given who desires an inquiry into whether the taking of such land is fair, sound and reasonably necessary in the achievement of the objectives of the expropriating authority shall so notify the approving authority in writing.

- in the case of a registered owner, served personally or by registered mail within thirty days after the registered owner is served with the notice, or when the registered owner is served by publication, within thirty days after the first publication of the notice;
- in the case of an owner who is not a registered owner, within thirty days after the first publication of the notice.

The approving authority is the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Pelham:
c/o Nancy J. Bozzatto, Town Clerk, 20 PELHAM TOWN SQUARE, P.O. BOX 400, FONTHILL, ON L0S 1E0.
THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF PELHAM Par. Nancy J. Bozzatto, Town Clerk.

This notice first published on the 22nd day of April, 2015.



Supervisor of Engineering – Public Works

The Town of Pelham is now accepting resumes from applicants with membership in good standing with the Ontario Association of Engineering Technicians & Technologists; proficiency in Microsoft Office software, CAD & GIS systems; and 3 to 5 years of experience in a municipal environment and supervisory experience. This full-time opportunity is offered at \$65,040 - \$76,516 annually.

Visit pelham.ca/career-opportunities for more information and to apply by Friday, May 1, 2015.

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Visit pelham.ca/career-opportunities for more information & to apply by Sunday, May 3, 2015.

MEETING POSTPONED

Please be advised the Public Meeting under the Planning Act regarding the Official Plan Amendment (OP-AM-01-2015 & OP-AM-02-2015) scheduled for Monday, May 11, 2015 has been postponed. Visit pelham.ca for details.

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LOCAL NEWS

■ AUTO RACING



An artist's conception of the Canadian Motor Speedway.

SUPPLIED GRAPHIC

Region says yes to tax break for NASCAR-style speedway

ROB HOULE
Postmedia Network

Niagara Region is waving the green flag on tax incentives for the Canadian Motor Speedway.

The Region's planning committee decided last week to expand its Niagara Gateway Economic Zone and Centre Community Improvement Plan west over the QEW to include the land at Bowen Rd. where the speedway and ancillary developments are planned.

The move allows the developers access to development charges and tax breaks that could total, a staff report notes, \$19.7 million. Under region policy, the speedway could see the return of a \$1.5 million development charge and yearly property tax breaks of \$1.8 million for 10 years.

The Region would collect the taxes in full from that point on.

Those incentives would apply only to Phase 1 of the project — the \$150-million, three-quarter-mile speedway and two-mile road course and its related facilities that will eat up 350 of the 820 acres.

Azhar Mohammad, a partner in the development, said a best-case scenario would see the track receive its permits by the end of the summer, with construction to take place over 18 months and an opening in 2017.

He said additional development at the site will see construction of an innovation and centre of excellence for racing research, development and prototypes in conjunction with post-secondary institutions to be built on 66 acres and a 75,000-square-foot commercial space.

The site will also have 185 acres of parking and camping areas. The estimated cost of the entire project is pegged at \$400 million, with all the money plunked down by Middle East investors, Mohammad said.

"We have never asked for any kind of support to build the speedway — never," he said. "And we will not ask for any money to contribute to the capital expense of building the 65,000-seat facility."

Mohammad said he and his partner have spent \$1.5 million in pre-development since announcing plans for the project in 2007, and he expects

another \$7 million to be spent getting to the permit stage.

All councillors on the planning committee supported the CMS plan, although Brian Heit of St. Catharines wanted a quicker return on the Region's investment.

He also wasn't agreeable to allowing a 100% property tax break for 10 years. Heit wanted incremental breaks, decreasing over time to 90%, 80% and so on.

Bill Hodgson of Lincoln expressed concern the Region would be on the hook if an application for funding the Town of Fort Erie has to the Small Communities Fund fell through.

The town has applied to the fund for \$42 million to provide water and sewer infrastructure to the CMS site. The successful application would see funding for the infrastructure cost-shared equally among the town, federal and provincial governments. CMS has committed to covering the town's third.

Hodgson tabled an amendment that would have stipulated the region would not cover any potential cash renegeing from any of the parties. The amendment was easily defeated, with Coun. Bob Gale calling it a "negative motion" and noted it wasn't necessary since any call for the Region to cough up a shortfall would have to come before council anyway.

"We have zero risk in this," Gale said.

"When we have zero risk and we're going to get jobs out of this, and the spin effect is companies supplying from the region — I think this whole conversation is moot."

Region Chair Alan Castlin said the speedway development aligns with council priorities.

"Since we started this new council term in December, we professed we are open for business — I can't think of a better way to demonstrate the fact we are open for business except to vote in favour of what's in front of us now, ..."

"What better way to demonstrate we are open for business than to vote in favour of this in front of us today."

rob.houle@sunmedia.ca
Twitter: RobH_Standard

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Grimsby: Niagara Regional Police Service, 45 Clarke St.

www.niagararegion.ca/health

Niagara Region



PUBLIC SAFETY

Police board hits the brakes on fast-tracking body cameras

BILL SAWCHUK
Postmedia Network

A decision to fast-forward a pilot project to mount body cameras on Niagara Regional Police officers was put on hold Thursday.

The police services board voted to shuffle the issue to its technology committee for consideration, rather than force ahead.

You just have to turn on the television any day to see the benefits body cams are provide in terms of improving public safety and police safety," said regional Councilman Andy Petrowski, a proponent of the cameras.

"I think the business case speaks for itself and, I'm told, you don't put a price tag on public safety," Regional Councilman David Barrick wanted the chief to bring forward a "project initiation report." A total of \$250,000 was set aside in the last pilot project budget for a study.

Chief Jeff McGuire recommended the board wait for the results of a study already underway with the Toronto Police Service, the

Attorney General and the OPP.

"It is not saying yes to body cams today," Barrick said. "It is saying project initiation. It is already funded. We have a large scope as to what a pilot could look like. I would like to see a pilot here with us as well."

Board chair Bob Gale sided with the chief.

"Toronto is already spending the money," he said.

"Why waste our money? Let them waste their money."

The board heard a presentation from IndigoVision, a Toronto-based company that supplies body cameras, and Clockwork Systems, a Niagara-based security company.

Glen Haley of IndigoVision told the board the cameras provide audio and video footage of events. Pilot projects in the United States have shown body cameras change behaviour during interactions with police, provide additional evidence and are valuable

training tools.

He said a study in Rialto, Calif. showed the cameras reduced complaints against police by 87%.

They also resulted in a 59% reduction in the use of force.

"From a secure data perspective, the units are encrypted," he said. "That video recorded from the device can only be accessed when it is plugged into a computer with the proper software or a USB docking station."

"If the camera is lost on shift, no one can get the video ... The officers themselves won't be able to get into it, it takes away some of the concerns about the video ending up on social media."

Board member Ken Gansel said he didn't want the board to rush into a pilot project, even with the money already set aside.

"We are going to eventually make a decision, and I

think the right one will be to deploy body cameras," he said. "I really feel having the research data from Toronto ... is vital."

McGuire said the NRP executive was already looking into body cameras.

"There are procedural issues that have to be developed," he said. "When is the camera on? When is the camera off? There are issues the privacy commissioner has recently addressed. It is not simply a matter of hanging a camera on an officer. There is also the data storage piece, which is financially terrifying to many police services."

"How long do we store data for? What do we do about redaction when it has to go to court? All of those things involve extra full-time employees. I know the OPP, to implement their system, is looking at millions upon millions of dollars for data storage."



Richard Brown
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TIME FOR A RAISE

The police board is asking regional council to consider a raise for board members in line with the 2.93% raise regional councillors voted themselves recently.

In the end, the board decided to ask for a raise for the three provincial appointees (Gansel, Vaughn Stewart and Bob Marshall) and civilian appointee Terry Bonham.

"I have no problem with you gentlemen, the provincial and citizen appointees (getting a raise)," Gale said. "But the political members (Gale, Petrowski and Barrick) would be bailed by the press for looking for another increase."

The last time the police services board received an increase was July 2009.

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LOCAL NEWS

■ **NIAGARA HEALTH SYSTEM:** Tammy Powell achieves standing with de Souza Institute

Nurse honoured for her cancer work

DAVID CHERNISH

Special to Postmedia Network

When Tammy Powell started her journey to become a nurse at St. Martha's School of Nursing in Antigoinish, N.S., she had never thought she would win an excellence award.

Powell, from Grimsby, is a registered nurse at Niagara Health System's Walker Family Cancer Centre and is the first Niagara nurse to achieve one of the highest designation levels by de Souza Institute.

"The de Souza nurses are symbolic of oncology nursing excellence and the de Souza Institute is proud to recognize Tammy as the first oncology nurse in Niagara to receive one of these unique designations," Dr. Mary Jane Espinen, director of the Institute, said in a release.

A leader in cancer-care, the de Souza Institute provides ongoing educational support and career counselling to more than 6,000 oncology nurses across Ontario.

In partnership with the University Health Network, Cancer Care Ontario and funded by Ontario's Ministry of Health and Long-term Care, the institute provides ongoing educational support, professional development and career counselling to nurses caring for cancer patients and families. Powell was in the military in Nova Scotia before she got accepted to St. Martha's.

"I was only in for three years, but it was a good thing to do," Powell said.

She graduated from nursing in 1989 and has been a nurse ever since.

Powell plays an important role in achieving the Walker centre's main priority — safe and quality care.

"I'm not in it for the glory I'm just in it to help people. This is nice, of course, it has been very rewarding and being acknowledged is nice, I've been a nurse for over 25 years and for my own self accomplishment it means the

world to me."

Powell received de Souza Nurse Associate level designation, an ideal designation for nurses who care for patients living with or at risk of developing cancer.

"I can't take all the credit for the designation. Without the team here none of us would get anything done so we work together and we are our own family."

Powell is passionate about nursing.

"As a nurse, we get to experience many different areas. I started in emergency care and you find out what you enjoy doing. I enjoy helping cancer patients and I love coming into work every day."

Powell says being an oncology nurse is worthwhile, knowing she's up to date as much as she can be for her patients.

Powell first enrolled in a de Souza course in 2010, and through dedication, commitment and time management, she completed her last course in 2014.

She plans to continue her education and work towards achieving the next level, which is a full de Souza Nurse Designation.

"From our side of the coin, we don't look at cancer as a disease. Yes, the patients have cancer, but cancer doesn't rule your life. Nowadays it doesn't."

Powell added so many people are now moving on from cancer she will do anything to help them along their journey.

"Niagara patients are receiving high-quality cancer care by nurses who

are dedicated and committed to our patients," said Derek McNally, Niagara Health System executive vice-president of clinical services and chief nursing executive.

Powell plans to continue to care for her cancer patients.

"It means a lot to me, this clinic has been around for 30 years. The cancer centre is new but the chemo clinic has been around for years. To know people can get that care here in Niagara means the world to me."



DAVID CHERNISH/SPECIAL TO POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Tammy Powell, the first Niagara Health System nurse to the first Niagara nurse to achieve one of the highest designation levels by de Souza Institute, stands by the St. Catharines hospital gown, which patients are encouraged to hit once they have finished their last treatment at the Walker Family Cancer Centre.

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LOCAL NEWS

In Jalapa, women's work can be crippling

GRANT LAFLECHE
Postmedia Network

Life is hard in Jalapa. That fact is as inescapable as gravity.

For most people living in these Guatemalan mountains, every day means straining their bodies just to meet the necessities of life.

Drive along the winding mountain highways on any given day, and you'll see people walking slowly along the side of the roads carrying something — bundles of sticks for fuel, food that is going to or from a market. And of course, water.

The women in the mountain communities are the water bearers.

They learn from as early as age five how to balance 18-kilogram water jugs on their heads. They will walk for kilometres up and down the steep roadways, often under a blazing sun, to fetch water and return home.

How difficult is it to haul water this way? As it turns out, extremely.

The Wells of Hope volunteers I have been working alongside were taken by team leader Norm Hauer to meet his friend Suzanne, a local woman, to get a taste of what it is like to be a human pack mule.

Suzanne walks down and up a steep highway that runs past her home, then down a craggy dirt path to reach the nearest watering hole. Like most of these basins, the water is unfiltered and untreated mountain runoff.

We joined Suzanne at her watering hole, about two kilometres from her house. After she filled a water jug for each of us, we lifted it up and balanced it on a rolled-up cloth resting on the top of our heads.

Then we walked up the uneven path back to the highway to her home.

I had assumed that while the task would be tedious, it surely could not be physically demanding. For days, I have watched old Guatemalan women and young children carry water up and down the mountains, and I am bigger and stronger than they are.

How hard can it be?

Oh, how wrong I was. The moment the jug is placed on your head, you feel the pressure on your neck and upper spine. As you climb, the pressure increases until it starts to feel like your spinal column is being crushed.

You can press upward on the jug's handles to provide some relief, but eventually your shoulders will get sore and you'll let the jug rest fully on your head again.

Many Guatemalan women have deformed spines because they start this work as young girls. Years of this sort of activity can permanently warp a woman's spine.

When we were finished, I was able to manage a short conversation with Suzanne using the little Spanish I know, telling her how sore my neck and back were after the two-kilometre hike from the water hole to her home.

I asked if her neck and back hurt as well.

She told me her neck and back always hurt. She lives in constant pain, yet makes this trek three to four times daily.

They may be small, but the women of the Jalapa mountains are some of the toughest, strongest and most durable people on the planet.

grant.lafleche@summedia.ca



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■ NIAGARA REGION NOTEBOOK

Welland bridge set to get LED lights

Let there be lights, LED lights! Niagara Region's public works committee endorsed a plan Tuesday that will see the recently refurbished Main Street Bridge in Welland fitted with LED lights. The cost of that project, which will be

shared between the Region and City of Welland, is estimated at slightly more than \$506,000.

The city included its share of the cost in budget deliberations Monday night (the budget will be voted on next week), but

Mayor Frank Campion warned the Region Tuesday in committee that the project had better come in at the estimated price.

"We need to make sure it doesn't go over budget," Campion said, "because we don't have any more money to contribute to it."

Campion noted that when the issue of cost-sharing the lighting project was brought to Welland council in November, he voted against it because there was no firm price tag.

Of the three bidders on the project, Procon Constructors Inc. came in with the lowest bid.

Its bid of \$414,000 bested that of E.S. Fox Ltd. (\$487,060) and Weinmann Electric Inc. (\$505,450).

The low bid, along with detailed design, contract administration and inspection and taxes, brings the estimated project cost to \$506,152.

St. Catharines regional Coun. Andy Petrowski had an issue with the call for bids that ended up excluding an unidentified company from the process because it did not attend a required site visit.

Ron Tripp, the Region's commissioner of public works, explained to Petrowski initial advertising calling for bids failed to mention a mandatory site visit was required by all bidders, "but the contract documents themselves clearly indicated" bidders were required to attend a meeting at the bridge prior to submitting bids.

"There was one bidder that I was aware of that picked up the tender package after that meeting took place, and therefore wasn't eligible to bid," Tripp said.

PELHAM NEWS ■ THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2015

Because it was staff's mistake in failing to note the mandatory site visit in the initial advertising, Tripp said staff "entertained" holding another meeting at the bridge for the benefit of those companies that did not pick up the contract documents until after the mandatory meeting.

They decided not to, though, because doing so was deemed to be unfair to the companies that had followed proper procedure.

St. Catharines regional Coun. Brian Heit took exception to Petrowski taking nearly 15 minutes with his questioning of Tripp.

"After 15 minutes of confusion — was the tender document correct and stated clearly there had to be a site visit?" Heit asked Tripp.

"Yes," Tripp answered.

"I don't know why we spent 15 minutes. (As) someone that looks at tenders... you don't go by the ad, you don't go by the e-mail, you go by the tender — the tender document has to be accurate. And if it is, we did everything right."

The City of Welland was to vote on its portion of the cost at council Tuesday, while regional council will bring it to a final vote next Thursday.

The Main Street Bridge underwent rehabilitation last year at a cost of \$3.38 million.

Subsequently, it was discovered an additional \$125,000 in re-coating will have to be undertaken, work that was not included in the original scope of work. The bulk of the money for that project will come from the contingency fund of \$500,000 attached to the rehab project.

The public works committee also heard Tuesday that litigation threatened by a disgruntled bidder on the Main Street Bridge rehab project has not proceeded beyond a statement of claim in April 2014.

"Pothole" Petrowski

Petrowski, who earlier this year said one reason he was the regional councillor with the most mileage claims in 2014 was because he looked into pothole complaints from Fort Erie residents — a claim for which he was dubbed Pothole Petrowski in the online comment sections of Post-media Niagara publications — asked for a status report on reconstruction of a portion of Dominion Rd. in Fort Erie.

"It's easier for me to ask questions here than travel out anywhere to see those potholes," Petrowski said.

"Do we have a solid date, a year, we're going to do a full reconstruction?"

Tripp said the issue of road conditions and prioritizing which ones to repair will be addressed in a report and presentation to council next week.

That presentation was to be made to the public works committee Tuesday, but was deferred when the presenter was unable to attend.

With a week to go in CAA's annual Worst Roads Campaign, Dominion Rd. as of April 10 was No. 8 in a provincial top 10 for 2015.

A final top 10 has not been released by CAA.



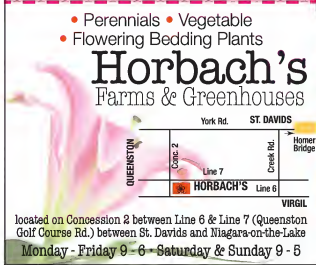
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LOCAL NEWS

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■ COMPETITION

Chainsaw artists create a buzz in Welland

FRANK IJEMAN
Postmedia Network

Artists from across the province are revving their engines for the second annual Chainsaw Carving Event that returns to Welland this week.

So far, 10 carvers have signed up to participate, which has added a competitive aspect this year with people's choice prizes being awarded.

It runs along Prince Charles Dr. at West Main St., on the property of West Side Propane from Thursday to Sunday.

Each carver will start with a bare, raw log and will have four days to create something out of it to be judged for the competition. On the last day, at 2 p.m., the pieces will be auctioned.

Last year's pieces sold for between a couple of hundred and a couple of thousand dollars.

Chainsaw carver and competition organizer Jean Pierre Gauthier said it brought in a lot of people last year — way more than what organizers had anticipated, and that people were liking what they saw.

"From eight months to 80 years old, everybody's always got the same expres-

sion — "Wow!" said Gauthier.

Stumps are already starting to accumulate along Prince Charles Dr. as everyone prepares for this week's competition.

Gauthier, a full-time carver, said the competition is a great free show for people in Welland to stop by and see.

Gauthier was approached by West Side Propane owner John Parisee of about starting chainsaw carving competition last year.

"In this end of the province there's nothing around like it," said Parisee.

He said that they're looking to move to a different venue for future events, as they're aiming to have it grow too large to fit at his site. Parisee said that they are trying to attract chainsaw carvers from across Canada and the United States.

Carvers can still register to take part in the competition, and wood is always needed.

For more information and to register, call Jean Pierre Gauthier at 905-892-0456.

frank.ijeman@postmedia.ca
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LOCAL NEWS

COMMUNITY

Daffodils synonymous with fight against cancer

JEN HARDY

Special to Postmedia Network

This is the first in a series of stories recognizing cancer awareness month.

Daffodils are in season again as a symbol for the Canadian Cancer Society.

The yellow flower, with its trumpet-shaped structure set against a star-shaped background, has been Canada's official symbol for the fight against cancer each April since the 1950s.

It stands for courage and strength. Throughout the month, Niagara residents can purchase daffodil pins or a bouquet of five daffodils distributed by the Canadian Cancer Society and support their local branch, the Niagara community office located in St. Catharines.

Pins are available at a variety of places such as restaurants, grocery stores and clothing outlets. Bouquets are available at Loblaws-affiliated grocery stores until Friday or until quantities run out.

Local branch manager Angela Daley said Niagara strives to reach its goal of \$40,000 through fundraising throughout April.

Last year, the community was able to raise \$1.7 million in Niagara alone.

The money is going to profit the region in a multitude of ways, said Daley.

Services offered by the Canadian Cancer Society — such as Wheels for Hope or the Resource Room, cancer research and prevention — will benefit from the daffodil sales.

"When we have success with research, that helps people," said Daley.

Wheels for Hope, offering volunteer transportation, serviced 1,150 cancer patients living in Niagara with 18,015 free trips to treatment facilities in 2014.

The Resource Room, at 67 Ontario St. in St. Catharines, is open Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and offers peer support for patients recently diagnosed with cancer, as well as free wigs for cancer patients.

Daley said wigs can be very expensive. All the wigs available at the Resource Room are donated.

Daffodils, a sub-family of the Narcissus plant, are not the only symbol for cancer.

Pink is the official colour for breast cancer, and pink ribbons first appeared in 1991.

The history of ribbons as a symbol of hope goes far back in history.

More recently, in 1979 Penney Laingen, the wife of an American man taken hostage in Iran, took an example from a popular song and tied yellow ribbons around trees in her front yard.

The ribbon symbolized her desire to see her husband come home. Across the U.S., Americans put up ribbons in solidarity.

Eleven years after, when AIDS activists pinned their red ribbon on actor Jeremy Irons during the Tony Awards show, the idea of linking rib-

bons to charity took off.

The Race for Cure marathon in New York City, held annually by the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, handed out the pink ribbons at the race and things started to snowball from there.

Many organizations have taken on a colour to represent their cause. Even though the colour is not officially linked to the cause, it is generally accepted and people recognize it as an affiliation with the cause.



JEN HARDY / SPECIAL TO POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Daffodils are available at numerous locations across Niagara.

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■ **NIAGARA COLLEGE:** The Baskerville Band is school's best title of the year

JULIE KADZVITI

SPECIAL TO POSTMEDIA NETWORK

The Baskerville Band is winner of best overall video game at Niagara College's second annual game development launch. The winning team from left: Sean Fackrell, Dalton Ingham, Allison Gains, Julie Benoit, Alyssa Felstead, Rob Colonic and Cody Tomotsugu. Pictured on Thursday April 16, 2015 in Welland, Ont.



JULIE KADZVITI

Special to Postmedia Network

Marching in a group of four, while completing fun challenges on three musical levels — that is the simple but award-winning premise of The Baskerville Band video game created by seven students in Niagara College's game development program.

The thrilling game won the award for best overall game at the college's second annual game development launch recently.

The fun event is a showcase for second- and third-year students in the program, who get to display the games they spent the better part of a year designing.

More than 200 guests attended the event and got the opportunity to play the games on display while mingling and enjoying some light snacks.

The winning team consisted of Rob Colonic, Alyssa Felstead, Allison Gains, Sean Fackrell, Julie Benoit, Cody Tomotsugu and Dalton Ingham. The members said they were "acutely" to win the coveted award.

Rick Goertz, the college's game development co-ordinator, commended the students on their hard work.

"I think it's a great night for the students, it's a celebration of all the work that they do, all their ideas. It's a really difficult thing to make a video game and they've managed to put this together in a couple of weeks of production. I think they are all great games," he said.

Goertz said The Baskerville Band was selected as best overall game because it was "unique and dynamic."

Another significant award, the Associate Dean's Award of Excellence, given to the student who is an all-round champion for the program, went to Joseph Boucher.

"I definitely wasn't expecting it. I kinda feel sick with excitement. I was shaking for the first couple of minutes but now I am extremely happy. It means that all the hard work I've put into this course has paid off," Boucher said.

Ericka Evans and David Evans of Phantom Compass, a game development company based in St. Catharines, came to see what the students had to offer and were not disappointed.

"I sat in on a panel that reviewed the original concepts, all six games turned out a lot better than I could have imagined. I was impressed with the amount of polish they had in the games, considering the amount of time they had," David Evans said.

Ericka Evans agreed. "They are very high quality games. The students are an exceptional bunch, they seem very job-ready, industry ready."

The games developed have improved year over year, said Goertz, a testament to the hard work the students put in.

"When you walk in the lab, you just see pizza boxes stacked up next to the garbage can, you know they were there all night," he quipped.

In The NEWS

Earth Day Observed by St Alexander Catholic School



Ron Kore, owner of Sobey's Fonthill, donated paper bags to the school for Earth Day.

Every student at the school decorated these bags with Earth-friendly messages.

Pictured is one representative for each classroom. On Wednesday, April 22nd, four Grade 8 students brought these bags to Sobey's – Fonthill and they packaged groceries for the community shoppers with these Earth Day messages.

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LOCAL NEWS

■ **POLICE TRAINING:** Divers go through their paces in a waterproof tank

Underwater assignment

KARENIA WALTER
Postmedia Network

Cries of help can be heard from beneath the overturned hull of a vessel in St. Catharines.

Const. Neil Lockwood of the Ottawa Police Service dive unit swims in the chilly 12°C water toward the sound.

"I can hear you. I am here to help you," he calls, as he squeezes through a window-sized opening and into a small crawlspace out of view.

"You OK, buddy? You sure? I'm going to give you the air tank."

A few minutes later, Lockwood emerges with the grateful victim. He's told by a supervisor to go back and save the man again — this time without a spotlight shining into the water. And the victim will put up a struggle this time.

The underwater scenario is being played out in the Niagara Regional Police overturned vessel training tank, a new tool for the service's police divers to experience what it's like to perform a rescue in cramped conditions.

"It's as close to real-life training as you can get," said Sgt. Bill Wiley, in charge of the marine and underwater search and recovery unit.

The \$13,000 tank is a modified shipping container, an idea borne from Wiley trying to come up with a way to train drivers for rescues underneath overturned boats.



BOB TYMCZYK/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Niagara Regional Police Const. Marc Garrels, playing the victim, surfaces as police divers from Ontario were performing controlled rescues in the NRP Overturned Vessel Training Tank. Divers were exposed to the conditions and perils of entering an overturned vessel, locating trapped persons and safely removing them.

It's the only training tool of its kind in Ontario.

"You can't replicate this in a public pool," Wiley said.

In use since December, the training tank is inside the NRP's St. Catharines emergency support services building and is filled nearly to the top with water. A large section of the container does not have a lid, but a small chamber on

the end — where the victim is waiting — is entirely enclosed except for that small window-sized opening.

It makes for a claustrophobic experience for the rescuer and the victim.

"Once you see that ray of light, it's a sigh of relief, even on a training scenario," said Const. Marc Garrels, a member of the NRP's dive unit for four years,

and on this day it's trapped victim.

He said every time he's in the tank he learns something different and gets something new out of the experience.

Garrels was in the water helping train three members of the Ottawa service who were using the tank for the first time.

"Being from Ottawa, we appreciate the opportunity to

train here. Having a chance to do this is amazing for us," said Const. Marty Dompiere, part of a unit tasked with rescues on the Ottawa River and Rideau River.

"It definitely feels very realistic," said Const. Alana Fong, who was acting as the second diver during Lockwood's scenario, feeling the tension in the lines between them.

If the radio communications were to conk out, the pair would communicate using line signals.

"It's different to just dive, than work through a scenario," she said.

The NRP's eight-member underwater search and recovery unit has been hosting a training course for police divers from six teams across Ontario this week. The four-day training includes using the overturned vessel tank, learning to repair police diving equipment and using underwater SONAR in the Welland Recreational Canal.

The NRP's unit does all of its own training for its members and its technicians are in-house.

Wiley said the Niagara service has the most waterways of any municipality in Ontario, including two Great Lakes, hydro-generating stations and the Welland Canal.

"It's a big area. It's incident rich," Wiley said. "There's a lot going on."

The unit is also unique because NRP divers are trained to support the tactical unit.

But it's not easy to recruit officers to do a job that involves being underwater and performing rescues on ice.

"Diving's not for everybody. It's a hard job. It's a dangerous job," Wiley said. "They're a very rare breed."

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■ EMPLOYMENT SURVEY

Personal skills, word of mouth key in job search

DON FRASER
Postmedia Network

Looking for a job in Niagara — and planning to keep it?

Best to beef up on your people skills and employment-behaviour basics.

Those are two findings of the recently released Niagara Workforce Planning Board's 2015 Employer One survey.

The survey was spearheaded by the planning board, which analyzed the results of 73 employers who completed it.

Employers in the region were asked questions in three categories — organization and workforce patterns, labour turnover and recruitment and skill shortages, training and education.

Essential skills most in demand included willingness to learn on the job, literacy and computer literacy, punctuality, common sense and customer service.

"It showed just how important the attitude, or soft skills, are when seeking and keeping a job," said board executive director David Alexander.

"It's these interpersonal skills, punctuality, and having a positive attitude in the workplace that are valued."

To that end, Alexander said, it's critical to "have conversations about skills needed in the workplace when young people are in school."

That can happen through mentoring and apprenticeship programs, through which a "worker will learn these kinds of skills by interacting with good employers who'll talk about with access with training."

"There's also a need to maintain tech-

nical or hard skills for people who are in the workplace or seeking a job," Alexander said.

Nearly 75% of survey respondents rated Niagara's supply of available workers as either good or fair.

Employers cited the top reason for positions being hard to fill as applicants not meeting skills. That was followed by work experience and then motivation, attitude or interpersonal abilities.

As for recruitment, the most common tools reported were word of mouth or various referrals, then online job boards and positions. A company's own Internet site was the third most commonly named method.

"It's important that people looking for work maintain contacts with people working in the industry they want employment in," Alexander said. "Not all jobs are advertised on the web."

The study also showed that based on those surveyed, it's taking longer for younger, well-trained people ages 25 and younger to move into permanent full-time positions.

Most of its workforce in the survey is also between 25 and 44, with generally smaller businesses with an average of seven to eight people.

The planning board also cautions that the survey, while it had an excellent response rate, reflects only the businesses who responded and doesn't necessarily represent the region as a whole.

It intends to repeat the Employer One survey in January 2016 and 2017.

To visit the study link, click on <http://www.niagaraworkforce.ca/employer-one/>

LOOKING FOR BOARD MEMBERS

Niagara Workforce Planning Board will soon be recruiting to add to its board of directors

via a posting at www.niagaraworkforce.ca. Interested applicants should

contact Lisa Cairns at 905-641-0801 or e-mail lcairns@niagaraworkforceboard.ca.

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■ **ENVIRONMENT:** Produce to be donated to local food banks

Community orchard blossoming on college campus

MARYANNE FIRTH
Postmedia Network

Niagara College has launched an initiative it hopes the community will take a bite out of — literally.

During its Earth Day celebration Saturday, the college held a groundbreaking for an ed-

ible orchard to be planted on the southwest portion of its Welland campus.

The orchard, made possible through a \$3,800 grant from Trees Canada, will include apple, pear, apricot and sweet and sour cherry trees. A variety of fruits and vegetables such as currants, asparagus, rhubarb and strawberries will

also be planted.

Produce grown in the new living laboratory will be donated to the on-campus student food bank, as well as local community food banks.

"It will be for the college and for the community," said sustainability co-ordinator Taryn Wilkinson, adding it will take a few years

before the trees mature enough to provide a bountiful harvest.

The espalier-style orchard, to be fully planted this summer, will have trees growing on trellises to encourage them to remain low to the ground, she said.

"This will mean easy access for anyone, including those with physical limitations, wishing to take a fruit or to tend to the orchard, she added.

"It will be a community orchard. We want people to be able to walk through and take an apple," said grounds co-ordinator Jennifer Lavery.

The orchard, sitting on about one-quarter of an acre, will be integrated into the campus walking trails and is intended to help draw people to the property.

It is expected to be used by the college's horticulture program, as well as by

students from local elementary and secondary schools.

Saturday's event was meant not only to celebrate Earth Day, but also introduce the community to the many biodiversity and sustainability initiatives underway at the college.

"We wanted there to be takeaways," said sustainability engagement assistant Gina Pannunzio. "Things people could learn here, take home and do in their own backyards."

Visitors learned how to make environmentally friendly bird feeders, how to start a bean garden and how to build bee condos that encourage the presence of pollinators.

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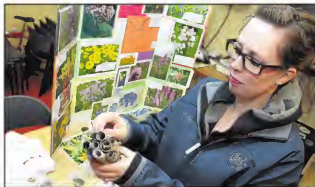
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MARYANNE FIRTH/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Niagara College sustainability co-ordinator Taryn Wilkinson looks over a bee condo made during a workshop held as part of the school's Earth Day celebration on Saturday, April 25, 2015, in Welland, Ont.



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ONTARIO NEWS

■ POLITICS

NDP to fight Hydro One sale

ANTONELLA ARTUSO
Postmedia Network

TORONTO — Ontario New Democrats have launched a website to battle the Liberal government's plan to sell a majority stake in publicly-owned Hydro One.

The NDP say the website | youpytheprice.ca is just part of an "aggressive, multi-platform anti-hydro privatization campaign," although the party does not have enough power in the legislature to vote any deal down.

"We know that privatization will mean even higher (hydro) rates for families and businesses who are already bracing for another 5% hike as of May 1," NDP Leader Andrea Horwath said Monday. "Ontarians did not vote for a platform of cuts and privatization. (Premier) Kathleen Wynne didn't campaign on



NDP Leader Andrea Horwath, right, and NDP finance critic Catherine Fife react to the provincial budget last week. Horwath said Monday that her party will stage an "aggressive, multi-platform anti-hydro privatization campaign," even though it doesn't have the power to vote any deal down in the legislature.

this.
In the legislature, Wynne said that the government will

move "carefully" to ensure that public interests are protected. Although the government

is selling off a 60% stake, no one buyer can own more than 10%.

"Selling off (Highway) 407 was a fire sale. That was the model we looked at and we

said, 'We're not doing that,'" Wynne said.

"There's no way we're going to sell an asset and rob the people of Ontario of any future value. There's no way we're going to undervalue an asset and sell it off."

Highway 407 was leased for 99 years in exchange for a one-time payment that the Mike Harris government used to balance the books in a single year.

The Wynne government expects to get \$9 billion from Hydro One, putting \$5 billion against electricity system debt and \$4 billion into a special fund to pay for infrastructure improvements.

While Wynne has said she doesn't believe hydro rates will go up, there has been no mention of a guarantee that the sale won't have that impact.

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Fight of the Century? Boxing blew it

JOHN LAW
Postmedia Network

So with another "Fight of the Century" about to happen, indulge me a bit. Take this quick-boxing quiz. Do you ...

1. Know when Floyd Mayweather's last fight was?

2. Know who the current WBC heavyweight champion is?

3. Know whether Manny Pacquiao currently holds any world titles?

Full disclosure: I went 0-3 on my own quiz.

Mayweather's last fight was in September 2014. Someone named Deontay Wilder is the current WBC heavyweight champ. And Pacquiao presently holds the WBO welterweight title.

These questions would have been a breeze back when I was borderline obsessed with boxing 30 years ago. Every title bout was lodged in my head, every big fight an event.

When we got the pay-TV service ON-TV — anyone remember that? — and could watch most every major match, I decided — at 13 years old — there would never be anything better than this, ever.

Boxing then felt like the NFL now: Bigger than anything. No Super Bowl could compare to Sugar Ray Leonard vs. Roberto Duran. No movie could match the sad drama of Larry Holmes vs. an aging Muhammad Ali. I kept a scrapbook of every story on every fight. I flip through it some nights and feel that love come back.

Living in Windsor, there was one big reason boxing meant so much: Tommy Hearns. He was from Detroit, but back then Windsor felt like a suburb of Detroit, so he was one of ours. He was our champion, our personal stake in the sport.

To date, I've only paid to watch one fight: Hearns vs. Sugar Ray Leonard in

September 1981. The biggest thing in the world at the time — like every World Series and Stanley Cup combined into one event. My dad and I watched it on a laughably small screen set up at the old Windsor Arena. The signal was lousy, not helped by the fact Leonard and Hearns both wore white trunks that night. It didn't matter. Despite Hearns losing, it's one of the most cherished events from my youth.

I want so bad for boxing to grab me like it did when I was 13, to get charged up for a Fight of the Century again. And every time, boxing disappoints me.

At first I figured the sport simply lost its allure, like that sad moment you realize you've outgrown band T-shirts and cereal for supper — outgrown ... not stopped. But no, boxing is the one who broke it off. Boxing, as a sport, decided it didn't care about its culture or exposure to casual fans. Boxing has become

so warped and clueless, it's pushing Mayweather vs. Pacquiao like it's a relevant, modern title fight instead of the stale crumbs it really is. For the good of the sport, here's a fight that needed to happen five or six years ago, when both fighters were in their prime. In the '70s and '80s it would be unheard of for this fight not to have happened when both were on top. Inconceivable. The closest it came was Leonard vs. Hagler, originally teased in 1982, but pushed back to 1987 when Leonard came out of retirement.

Now? Mayweather and Pacquiao avoid each other. They bicker over money and contracts and other baloney fight fans don't care about. They delayed the prize until, really, it didn't matter any more. Pacquiao is an aging fighter who lost twice since this fight should have happened; Mayweather is an absentee champ who has

had — get this — six fights in five years.

This is the Fight of the Century? I was more excited for Kenny vs. Spenny.

So what ruined boxing? Massive pay days certainly, forcing everyone to pony up \$60 or more for each significant fight.

A glut of sanctioned organizations muddled the picture. WBC, WBO, IBF, WBF. With so many title holders, there's never the sense of a true champion in each weight class. The public gets puzzled, the product diluted.

More than anything, though, boxing just isn't accessible. It's like the sport declared itself a hermit and retreated from public view, which makes the hype for every big fight bizarre. I realize Mayweather and Pacquiao are great fighters, but I've never seen either of them fight on free TV, where you build mainstream interest. Where casual fans become

serious fans.

For more than 40 years, boxing's biggest matches have been pay to watch events, but in-between you could watch Ali, Leonard, Hearns, Hagler and other icons defend their titles against lesser opponents on TV. By the time they crossed paths, we knew who they were, what they could do. The event sold itself. Now, it doesn't matter what Mayweather or Pacquiao can do because we rarely see them do it.

Boxing can't hold its audience at arm's length and expect to remain relevant. UFC saw this and tried to capitalize, before committing many of the same sins.

So on May 2, while the last Fight of the Century is happening, I'll be doing something else. Watching hockey. Maybe seeing Avengers: Age of Ultron. Probably sleeping. Boxing goes on without me, and in a unanimous decision, I don't miss it.

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LOCAL NEWS

DAY OF MOURNING

Ceremonies Tuesday to remember fallen workers

Postmedia Network

Ceremonies are being held throughout Niagara this week to honour men and women who died or were injured while on the job.

Local labour organizations will join politicians and members of Niagara's communities Tuesday to commemorate the annual National Day of Mourning, to focus attention on the disturbing number of workplace injuries and fatalities.

ties.

Ceremonies organized by the Niagara Regional Labour Council are taking place at workers monuments in nine Niagara communities throughout the day.

In a media release, NRLC vice-president Chris Grawey said the ceremonies are intended to focus attention "on the shocking extent of workplace injuries and fatalities."

"In 2013 alone, 243 workers

died on the job in Ontario.

Disturbingly, studies demonstrate that fatality figures are grossly underestimated, with thousands more dying annually from exposure to toxic substances in the workplace," he wrote.

"We must be reminded of our collective responsibility to seek stronger health and safety protections, stronger enforcement, along with fair and just compensation."

SCHEDULE OF CEREMONIES

8 a.m., St. Catharines at the monument under the St. Catharines Skyway on the Welland Canal Parkway trail.

9 a.m., Niagara-on-the-Lake at Centennial Arena, 1557 Four Mile Creek Rd.

10 a.m., Niagara Falls at city hall, 4310 Queen St.

11 a.m., Fort Erie at town

hall, 1 Municipal Centre Dr. 12:30 p.m., Port Colborne at the monument in H.H. Knoll Park on Sugarloaf St.

1:30 p.m., Welland at the monument in Merritt Park on King St.

2:30 p.m., Port Robinson at the site of the Esquire Canada explosion where Robyn

Lafleur was killed in 1999, 125 South St. N. 3:30 p.m., St. Catharines at the monument in Memorial Park on St. Paul St. W. 4:30 p.m., Niagara Region, at Region of Niagara Headquarters, 2201 St. David's Rd., Thorold.



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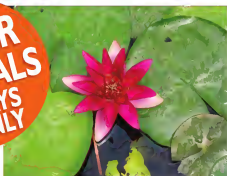
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